



## Policy on Head Start Participation in YoungStar

Effective August 1, 2013

### Policy

Head Start sites that accept Wisconsin Shares child care subsidies must participate in YoungStar. Head Start sites that do not accept Wisconsin Shares child care subsidies may participate in YoungStar.

Rating of participating Head Start sites (grantees or delegates) is as follows:

- Participating Head Start sites are awarded a 5 Star automatic rating if:
  - The site is a stand-alone Head Start site with no child care provided; **or**
  - The site provides 3 or fewer hours of child care per day. If the site is reimbursed by the Wisconsin Shares program (also known as county subsidies) for an average<sup>1</sup> of more than 3 hours per day (more than 15 hours per week), the site is **ineligible** for the automatic 5 Star rating.
- Head Start partner sites are not eligible for the 5 Star automatic rating because they do not receive the same oversight and review by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) as Head Start grantees and delegates.
- Head Start sites that provide more than 3 hours of child care in the summer or on school breaks **may** be eligible for the automatic 5 Star rating if, at all other times of the year, they provide or are paid by the Wisconsin Shares program for an average of 3 or fewer hours of child care per day.
- Programs that have one Head Start classroom and at least one other child care classroom that operates more than 3 hours per day are not eligible for the automatic 5 Star rating.
- Participating Head Start sites that are not eligible for the automatic 5 Star rating will be rated using the YoungStar Evaluation Criteria for Group Programs unless they are a certified or licensed family provider. In which case, they will be evaluated using the Evaluation Criteria for Family Child Care.
- All other YoungStar policies must be followed.

### Technical Assistance and Micro-Grants

Head Start sites receiving the YoungStar automatic 5 Star rating are not eligible for YoungStar Technical Assistance or a Micro-Grant. Participating Head Start sites that do not receive the automatic 5 Star rating are eligible to request Technical Assistance and a Micro-Grant.

### New Head Start Grantees or Delegates

When Head Start grants are redetermined by the ACF, the Department of Children and Families (DCF) requests a list of Head Start sites (grantees, delegates and/or partners) from the grantees. DCF reviews the programming at each site (grantee, delegate and/or partner) and determines whether YoungStar participation is necessary and if any of the sites are eligible for a 5 Star automatic rating. If a site had been a Head Start site under a previous Head Start grantee, they **may** be able to continue their current rating and involvement with YoungStar as long as services and hours of child care remain the same. If a program was allowed to have an automatic 5 Star rating under a previous grantee or under previous Head Start policy, they are not

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<sup>1</sup> The average daily child care hours are determined by taking the total number of hours of child care authorized per week and dividing it by the number of days per week the program is open. For example, if 25 hours of child care are provided each week, the average daily child care provided would be 5 hours (25 ÷ 5 = 5).

automatically eligible for the automatic 5 Star rating under a new grantee.<sup>2</sup> The DCF staff review of individual sites will make this determination.

If a Head Start site is brand new and was not a grantee, delegate or partner previously, the site is not eligible for the 5 Star automatic rating until they have received a Head Start Performance Standard review by ACF with no deficiencies identified. After ACF has determined that the site has demonstrated it is in full compliance with the Head Start Program Performance Standards, it is eligible to receive the 5 Star automatic rating if it is a stand-alone Head Start or a Head Start offering or being paid by Wisconsin Shares for 3 or fewer hours of child care on average per day.

New Head Start sites, prior to receiving a Head Start Performance Standard review by ACF, are eligible to be rated using the typical YoungStar process if they provide any child care outside of Head Start time.<sup>3</sup> To be eligible to achieve a YoungStar rating higher than a 3 Star, the site needs to be open at the current physical location for at least 12 months. This means that a new Head Start site, open at a new physical location less than 12 months, can ask for an automated rating and receive a 2 Star rating or they can ask for a Technical Rating and earn up to 3 Stars. If the site has been open at the physical location for at least 12 months, the site can request a Formal Rating and earn up to 5 Stars if all YoungStar criteria to achieve 5 Stars is met.<sup>4</sup>

### Deficiency

If the granting agency of a Head Start site that is receiving the YoungStar automated 5 Star rating receives a deficiency on their Administration for Children and Families (ACF) triennial review, the grantee and delegate agencies that have received the automatic 5 Star rating are no longer eligible for the automatic 5 Star rating in YoungStar. Once the ACF deficiency is lifted and DCF is notified of this by ACF, the Head Start sites that were affected by the deficiency can immediately move back to the 5 Star rating as long as they do not accept Wisconsin Shares child care subsidies beyond the maximum of 3 hours per day (15 hours per week) and meet all other criteria outlined in Head Start participation in YoungStar policies.

### **Procedure**

The procedures for participating Head Start sites differ depending on whether a site accepts Wisconsin Shares child care subsidies. Please see the appropriate section below.

#### Head Start Sites with No Child Care (Stand-Alone Head Starts)

1. Site turns in YoungStar Contract to local YoungStar office. The local YoungStar office sends the YoungStar Contract to DCF.
2. DCF verifies the site is Head Start and that the site is not authorized for any hours of child care in the Wisconsin Shares program.
3. Site is rated 5 Stars automatically in YoungStar.
4. If a site receives a deficiency in their ACF triennial review, the site is no longer eligible for participation in YoungStar and is removed from the program.
5. If the Department of Children and Families (DCF) receives written verification by ACF that the deficiency is lifted, the site that had previously been negatively impacted by the deficiency notice can be reinstated to a 5 Star rating as of the week the deficiency is lifted by ACF.

#### Head Start Sites That Provide or Are Paid by Wisconsin Shares for an Average of 3 or Fewer Hours of Child Care per Day

1. Site turns in YoungStar Contract to local YoungStar office.
2. The local YoungStar office sends the YoungStar Contract to DCF.
3. DCF verifies the site is Head Start and that the site is not authorized for more than 3 hours per day of child care in the Wisconsin Shares program.

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<sup>2</sup> Programs that were previously allowed to have the 5 Star automatic rating while being paid Wisconsin Shares funds for more than 3 hours per day (on average) or more than 15 hours per week are **not** eligible to receive the 5 Star automatic rating beginning August 1, 2013.

<sup>3</sup> If the site is accepting Wisconsin Shares, they must be rated through the typical YoungStar process.

<sup>4</sup> Formal Ratings require at least 2 consecutive hours of child care to be provided in order to complete the observation. Head Start sites that do not provide more than 2 consecutive hours of child care, therefore, are not eligible for a Formal Rating. These sites would be eligible for an Automated or Technical Rating to earn up to 3 Stars.

4. Site is rated 5 Stars automatically in YoungStar.
5. If DCF receives a deficiency notice from ACF related to a Head Start grantee, delegate or child care partner that had previously received the automatic 5 Star rating, the site are dropped immediately to a 2 Star rating. Their Wisconsin Shares subsidies are paid at the -5% level.
6. A letter and a YoungStar Change Request form are sent to the impacted site, indicating that the deficiency has been received. The site should complete and sign the Change Request form and return the form back to DCF if they want to request to go through the typical YoungStar rating process and be eligible to earn a rating higher than a 2 Star.<sup>5</sup>
  - a. If the Change Request is not received by DCF, the site remains at 2 Stars until their YoungStar Contract expires or the ACF notifies DCF that the deficiency is lifted.
  - b. If the Change Request is received, the site can be rated through the typical YoungStar rating process of either a Technical Rating or Formal Rating. If the site is then rated higher than a 2 Star, they will receive higher payment beginning the week the Technical or Formal Rating is completed.<sup>6</sup>
7. If DCF receives notification from ACF that the ACF deficiency is subsequently lifted, the Head Start site may move back up to the automatic 5 Star rating, if they wish, by submitting a new YoungStar Change Request to DCF. The 5 Star automatic rating would be effective the week the ACF deficiency is lifted.

Head Start Sites That Provide or Are Paid by Wisconsin Shares for an Average of More Than 3 Hours of Child Care per Day

1. Site turns in YoungStar Contract to local YoungStar office.
2. Site is rated through the typical YoungStar rating process. ACF deficiencies do not affect these sites.

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<sup>5</sup> Send completed Change Request to Bridget Cullen, 201 E Washington Ave Room E200, PO Box 8916, Madison, WI 53708-8916 or [Bridget.Cullen@wisconsin.gov](mailto:Bridget.Cullen@wisconsin.gov).

<sup>6</sup> Programs are only eligible for a Formal Rating if they have been in business at their current physical location for one calendar year and meet other minimum requirements as outlined in the [YoungStar Evaluation Criteria for Group Programs](#).